

CCDC Board of Directors Meeting 3/23/20

Redevelopment Updates

- 1. SFS Phase 2** – Despite an unexpected last-minute roadblock in the approval process, our partners rallied together to win unanimous approval from the Charlottesville Planning Commission on March 10 for the final site plan for South First St. Phase 2. (The erosion & sediment control plan remains under review.) Much appreciation to all who came together to ensure the plan was approved. We give special thanks to the engineers from both Collins Engineering and the City's Dept. of Neighborhood Development Services for going the extra mile to get the plan to an approvable form. An approved site plan was the last major piece required for our Low Income Housing Tax Credit application, which we were subsequently able to submit to VHDA by the March 12 deadline. Coincidentally, we were very pleased to welcome a site visit by three top officials from VHDA (including Executive Director Susan Dewey) on March 5. They toured several of our sites and had a chance to meet with some of our South First St. resident planners and hear all about the community design work that went into the SFS Phase 2 project. The VHDA officials were very complementary of our efforts and appreciated the chance to get a first-hand view of the work we're doing; one said that the resident engagement happening at SFS surpassed anything he'd seen in any other community. Hopefully, this bodes well for the project as we await the outcome of the LIHTC review & scoring process. We expect to hear the result in May.
- 2. Crescent Halls & SFS Phase 1** – Many people have been asking if the coronavirus situation is going to delay or otherwise affect construction on our first two redevelopment projects (Crescent Halls & South First St. Phase 1). As of now, all we can say is...quite possibly. The medical professionals on our Relocation Advisory Team have urged us to postpone moving residents from the 8th floor of Crescent Halls into vacant units elsewhere in the building. (That work was supposed to commence in the next couple of weeks.) Reason being, they do not feel it's safe for moving crews to be coming in and out of the building, and in out of residents' units, when the elderly individuals who live in Crescent Halls are among the most vulnerable to the virus (and have much higher mortality rates if they contract the virus). So, the relocation of residents may well result in a delay to the renovation work. We are also unclear how the looming economic downturn & the virus' impact on construction supply lines may impact our projects. Many variables in play right now. On top of all that, the final pricing from our contractors came in well over the budgets on both projects, so we may have to go back to our donors & funders to request more funds (rather than overly cutting corners and delivering an inferior quality product to our residents). In anticipation of doing so, we are having to get a couple of cost estimates from other contractors so we can persuade our funders beyond the shadow of a doubt that the additional funds are in fact necessary.
- 3. Section 3** – Good news and bad news about our Section 3 program: Working in collaboration with the City's Office of Economic Development and PVCC, we kicked off our first Trade Builders Academy (10-week building trades training program for Section 3 participants) on March 9. The group of 10 trainees included 6 public housing or Section 8 residents and 4 other low-income community residents. Several of the participants were recently-returned offenders trying to get back on their feet. The training program got off to a strong start but unfortunately was suspended after four days due to the coronavirus. Our Section 3 Coordinator, Joy Johnson, is now working with the trainees to support them during this unexpected hiatus and we hope to get them back into training (if even a virtual training experience) soon.